

REMARKS

By this Amendment, Claims 1, 5-7 and 9-53 have been canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein, leaving Claims 2-4 and 8 pending. Reconsideration of the February 5, 2004, Official Action is respectfully requested.

1. Allowed Subject Matter

Each of the pending Claims 2-4 and 8 have been allowed.

2. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

(a) Claims 1, 5-7, 17-20, 23, 25, 26, 28-32, 35, 37-39, 42, 44-47 and 49-53 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,155,268 to Takeuchi ("Takeuchi") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,212,347 to Eastman ("Eastman"); (b) Claims 9, 21, 22, 24, 33, 34, 36, 40, 41 and 43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Takeuchi in view of Eastman, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,743,251 to Howell et al.; and (c) Claims 10-16, 27 and 48 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Takeuchi in view of Eastman, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,586,110 to Obeshaw. These rejections are moot.

3. Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

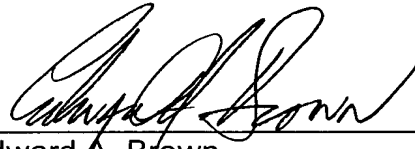
Respectfully submitted,

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2/27/04

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